

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE PRIORITY 1293

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 0918

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CD

SUBJ: CHADIAN MILITARY REGIME ON EVE OF FIRST ANNIVERSARY

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: GOC MOUNTING EXTENSIVE FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS, INCLUDING PARACHUTE DROP BY CABINET. NEW ACCORDS WITH FRANCE AND APPARENT SOVIET DECISION SUPPLY AT LEAST SOME ARMS, WERE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS PRECEDING ANNIVERSARY, WHILE GOC HAS LET USG KNOW IT DISAPPOINTED THUS FAR IN ITS SEARCH FOR USG ASSISTANCE IN AREAS WHICH IT REGARDS AS HAVING HIGH PRIORITY. INTERNAL SECURITY, PARTICULARLY IN NORTH, CONTINUES TO BE MAJOR PROBLEM AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IS MAJOR THEME OF ANNIVERSARY. PRESIDENT MALLOUM APPEARS FIRMLY IN SADDLE. HIS REGIME FACES MANY DIFFICULT AND SOME SEEMINGLY INSOLUBLE PROBLEMS, BUT IT CAN TAKE SATISFACTION IN PROGRESS MADE IN SEVERAL FIELDS. MALLOUM SPEECH ON APRIL 13 EXPECTED TO HIGHLIGHT THESE FIELDS AS WELL AS TO CONTAIN DEFINITIVE POLICY STATEMENT FOR FUTURE. END SUMMARY

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2. CHADIAN MILITARY GOVERNMENT LED BY PRESIDENT MALLOUM HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT AND THUS FAR SUCCESSFUL EFFORT COMMEMORATE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF MILITARY OVERTHROW OF LATE PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE ON APRIL 13, 1975. IN MARKED CONTRAST TO LAST YEARS OF TOMBALBAYE, PRESIDENT MALLOUM AND OTHER SENIOR MEMBERS REGIME ARE PRESENT (AND, MORE REMARKABLY FOR CHAD, PRESENT ON TIME) AT INCREASED NUMBER PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS.

3. CELEBRATIONS BEGAN WITH NATIONAL SPORTS WEEK, AT CLOSURE OF WHICH RELAXED AND SMILING PRESIDENT WON BOISTROUS CROWD APPROVAL BY SPECIAL ATTENTIONS TO BAREFOOT 13 YEAR-OLD GIRL WHO SET NATIONAL WOMEN'S RECORD IN 1,500 METER RACE. FIRST COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL EXPOSITION AT NDJEMENA PLACE DE L'INDEPENDENCE CONSISTED OF 50/60 BOOTHS AND EXHIBITIONS LOCAL RETAILERS, INDUSTRIES, AND INTERNATIONAL FIRMS (CONOCO, MOBIL, ETC.) PLUS SMALL SOVIET EMBASSY STAND EXHIBITING "INTERNATIONAL BOOKS." (EMBASSIES WERE NOT SOLICITED; SOVIETS TOOK INITIATIVE TO SEEK SPACE AND WERE ONLY GOVERNMENT REPRESENTED.) EXPOSITION SIMPLE BUT SLIGHTLY SUCCESSFUL WITH LOCAL CROWDS AND, ACCORDING TO FOREIGN MINISTERS, BIGGER AND BETTER EXPOSITION ALREADY BEING PROPOSED FOR NEXT YEAR. IN EARLY MORNING OF APRIL 12, GOC ACHIEVED WHAT MAY WELL BE A FIRST: MOST OF SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL AND THUS MAJORITY OF CABINET, LED BY MINISTER FOREIGN AFFAIRS KAMOUQUE AND MINISTER FINANCE GEN. DJOGO PARTICIPATED IN PARACHUTE DROP ON NDJAMENA RACECOURSE WITHOUT INCIDENT AMIDST CHEERING CROWD OF SEVERAL THOUSAND. MAJOR EVENT APRIL 13 SCHEDULED TO BE PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH, FOLLOWED BY PARADE (WHICH RUMORED TO INCLUDE SOVIET ROCKET LAUNCHERS FOR FIRST TIME IN PUBLIC) AND PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION IN EVENING.

4. DOMESTIC THEME THUS FAR HAS BEEN NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, WHICH BANNERS PROCLAIM TO BE "LEIT MOTIV" OF SMC. PRESS AND RADIO HAVE BEEN REVIEWING LAST DAYS OF TOMBALBAYE REGIME, STRESSING, IN EFFECT, THAT LOYAL MILITARY HAD DECIDED THAT NATION COULD NO LONGER SUFFER CATASTROPHE OF PERSONALITY CULT AND HAD THEREFORE SEIZED POWER TO RELIEVE SUFFERINGS OF PEOPLE.

5. ON INTERNATIONAL SIDE, TWO MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS HAVE BEEN CONCLUSION LAST MONTH OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH FRANCE AND CLOSER TIES, PARTICULARLY MILITARY, WITH SOVIET UNION. VISIT MARCH 29-APRIL 6 OF THREE MAN SOVIET MILITARY CONFIDENTIAL

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OBSERVER DELEGATION, HEADED BY GENERAL OFFICER, NOW FAIRLY COMMON KNOWLEDGE AMONG DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AS IS REPORT THAT SOVIET WEAPONS WILL BE EXHIBITED FOR FIRST TIME APRIL 13 PARADE (DETAILS REPORTED DAO CHANNELS). SOVIETS, IN ADDITION, SIGNED CULTURAL AGREEMENT WITH GOC ON APRIL 10 (DETAILS NOT YET ANNOUNCED). EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S FED ALSO SIGNED NEW FIVE YEAR ACCORD WITH GOC IN MARCH, DETAILS OF WHICH EXPECTED BY

ANNOUNCED APRIL 13. THERE IS ALSO SPECULATION, ALTHOUGH NO EVIDENCE KNOWN TO EMB, THAT PRC MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO TOSS INTO ANNIVERSARY POT. GOC HAS CONVEYED TO EMBASSY THROUGH INFORMAL CHANNELS AND MORE FORMALLY IN FOREIGN MINISTER'S REMARKS TO CHARGE FOLLOWING EXIM BANK TURNDOWN OF DOLS 2.4 MILLION TELECOMMUNICATIONS LOAN, ITS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT USG HAS NOT BEEN MORE FORTHCOMING IN THOSE AREAS WHICH GOC HAS IDENTIFIED AS HAVING HIGH PRIORITY, ALTHOUGH SIGNATURE APRIL 10 DOLS 213,000 WORTH AID AND SELF-HELP PROJECTS WARMLY WELCOMED. (FOOTNOTE: GOC FOREIGN MINISTER KEPT BOTH SOVIET AMBASSADOR AND US CHARGE WAITING ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS BEYOND SCHEDULED SIGNING TIME FOR SOVIET CULTURAL AGREEMENT AND AID AGREEMENTS WHILE MINISTER REVIEWED REHEARSAL PARADE. FRENCH HAVE OWN PROBLEMS, ACCORDING SENIOR OFFICER FRENCH EMBASSY, WHO TOLD EMB THAT PRESIDENT MALLOUM DISSATISFIED WITH INTERIOR COLOR SCHEME OF CARAVELLE WHICH PRESENTED AS GOF GIFT TO HIM APRIL 4, AND HAS ASKED THAT AIRPLANE BE RETURNED TO FRANCE FOR INTERIOR REDECORATION.)

6. UNSPOKEN BUT PRESENT IN MINDS OF BOTH FOREIGNERS AND CHADIANS AS APRIL 13 DAWNS, IS QUESTION OF INTERNAL SECURITY DURING CELEBRATIONS. ONE ARAB AMBASSADOR TOLD CHARGE HE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING DIPLOMATIC ILLNESS AS ALTERNATIVE TO ATTENDING APRIL 13 SPEECH AND PARADE, BUT EMB AND MOST OBSERVERS CONSIDER CHANCE MAJOR INCIDENT NJAMENT SLIGHT. SECURITY PRECAUTIONS ARE TIGHT, EVEN INCLUDING SUSPENSION OF CHARI RIVER FERRY CONNECTING CHAD WITH CAMEROON AND NIGERIA DURING APRIL 12-13 HOLIDAY. MORE LIKELY WOULD BE ATTACK BY REBELS ON TOWNS OR OUTPOSTS NORTHERN CHAD, ALTHOUGH FRENCH TRANSPORTS HAVE ARRIVED CHAD SUFFICIENT TIME REPLENISH GARRISONS.

7. IN SUM, ON EVE OF FIRST ANNIVERSARY MILITARY RULE CHAD, MILITARY REGIME APPEARS CONFIDENT AS IT PREPARES LARGEST CELEBRATIONS IT CAN MUSTER. SMC PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OF STATE GEN. MALLOUM HAS NOT YET ACHIEVED ONE MAN RULE, BUT HE HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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INCREASINGLY CONSOLIDATED HIS POSITION IN PAST FEW MONTHS AND THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE NO OBVIOUS ALIGNMENTS AMONGST THOSE WHO COUNT, I.E., HIS FELLOW MILITARY, PREPARED TO CHALLENGE HIM AT MOMENT. NO NORTHERNERS, MOSLEMS, AND MERCHANTS (OFTEN THE SAME) ARE DISSATISFIED BUT CAUTIOUS. WHILE THE MILITARY REGIME CONTINUES TO FACE MANY SERIOUS AND SOME ALMOST INSOLUBLE PROBLEMS, IT CAN AND UNDOUBTEDLY WILL TAKE CREDIT ON APRIL 13 FOR SEVERAL ACHIEVEMENTS, NOT LEAST OF WHICH IS ITS OWN MAINTENANCE IN POWER.DWYER

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